



ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m., January 21, 2004

1255 Imperial Avenue, 4th Floor

Conference Room 436

San Diego, CA 92101

Members Present:

Bob Barrios
Mike Chee
Arthur Ecker
Dan Elkerton
Richard Gersberg
David Gomez
Rich Leap
Anthony Manoguerra
Carolyn Powers
Jerry Spahn
Bob Shuster
Malcom Vinji

Members Absent:

Bob Crouch
Ed Heidig (excused)
Ruth Heifetz (excused)

Others Present:

Gary Erbeck, DEH
Rich Haas, DEH
Jack Miller, DEH
Mark McPherson, DEH
Liz Quaranta, DEH
Julie Ellery
Fran Sjoberg, DEH

I. CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chairman Malcolm Vinji called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No member of the public addressed the Board.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

The Board unanimously approved the minutes from the December 3, 2003 meeting.

IV. PROGRAM UPDATES

• Vector Control Program – *Jack Miller, Chief of Community Health Division*

Jack Miller discussed the Vector Control program efforts to minimize the impact of West Nile virus for the upcoming mosquito-breeding season. Vector Control is planning on conducting monthly aerial applications of larvicides on larger water bodies. Last year's aerial applications demonstrated that the larvicide remains effective in reducing mosquito populations for 30 days. Monthly applications confirmed the effectiveness of reducing breeding levels; therefore, minimizing virus transmission. Last year mosquito fish were only available at the Hazard Way office, but this year locations were expanded to include pet stores and County parks. Locations will be posted on the web pages www.SDFightTheBite.com and www.sdcdeh.org.

It's predicated that mosquito complaints will dramatically increase again this year. In 2002, Vector Control received 799 complaints, and in 2003, 2,247 mosquito complaints were received. We anticipate staffing an emergency phone center when the first human case is found. To address this dramatic increase in workload, Vector Control will need to bring in extra help. These costs, on top of the aerial applications, will severely impact the reserves in the Vector Trust Account. Jack explained that the County is exploring funding alternatives and one of those alternatives is increasing the property-based fees. An EHAB Vector Subcommittee will be organized to continue discussion on these issues.

• Small Water Systems Program – *Mark McPherson, Chief, Land and Water Quality Division*

Mark explained that the State of California, Department of Health Services (SDHS) delegated the County of San Diego as the Local Primacy Agency (LPA). The LPA is responsible for enforcing the state drinking water regulations on small water systems in the unincorporated areas of the County.

Permit revenue that is generated in the small water system program only supports one staff year. To meet the LPA requirements, the State believes we need two full time staff to properly meet the LPA requirements. Twenty additional State regulations requiring testing and reporting have been added and during that same period of time the County has not increased staff levels to address the dramatically increased workload.

Current permit revenue for the program is \$83,000, and is augmented with a \$48,000 grant from the State. The current average water purveyor permit fee is \$453.00. DEH has learned that due to the State budget problems, the grant may not be renewed in subsequent years.

DEH has developed three solutions:

- 1) Increase staffing to two full time staff and raise fees to support the increase allowing the County to continue a program that it has successfully performed for over 30 years.
- 2) Increase staffing to two full time staff and raise permit fees over a three-year period.
- 3) Voluntarily terminate the LPA agreement, which would result in the loss of one staff year and revenue of \$83,000. The State has stated that they do not have the resources to provide the kind of technical advice that purveyors currently receive from the County.

- Radiation Health State Revenue Contract – **Gary Erbeck, Director**

Gary detailed the San Diego County Radiological Health Program. He explained that the program is contracted by the State Department of Health Services, Radiological Health Branch to enforce the state and federal radiation control regulations. Our program is one of a few designated to conduct radiation inspections. Radiological Health Specialists ensure safety compliance and education to radioactive materials licensees, X-ray machine registrants and the public. Specialists also inspect mammography X-ray facilities to determine compliance with the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) regulations.

The yearly cost to run the program is \$809,258 of which the County contributes \$206,614. We currently have four filled staff positions: Senior Health Physicist, two Associate Health Physicists, and one Assistant Health Physicist. One Assistant Health Physicist and one Office Support Clerk remain vacant.

In San Diego County there are six nuclear submarines, and two nuclear carriers. Staff also works with biotech companies and participates in the emergency preparedness planning for the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station. Gary discussed the need to gain funding from the Homeland Security agency.

EHAB members strongly support the continuation of the Radiological Health Program. A motion was made and carried to continue participation in the Radiological Health Program.

V. FORMULATE MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2004

- The Committee agreed to meet on a monthly basis effective February 25, 2004. Meetings will be held on the 4th Wednesday of each month, starting at 8:00 a.m. at DEH headquarters located at 1255 Imperial Avenue, 4th Floor, Conference Room 436, San Diego.

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VI. ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 a.m.

Next Meeting:

Wednesday, February 25, 2004

8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

1255 Imperial Avenue, 4th Floor - Conference Room 436,
San Diego, CA